

# Delaware Chapter GOVERNOR'S NEWSLETTER

**ACP**  
AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS  
INTERNAL MEDICINE | *Doctors for Adults*

Summer 2004

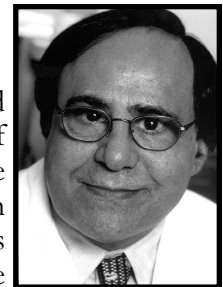
**Mansour Saberi, MD, FACP, FACE**  
*Governor, Delaware Chapter*

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## THANKS TO MEMBERS

This is my first letter as Governor, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members for their support. They have given me the honor and pleasure to serve them as Governor for the next 4 years. I was inducted as Governor on April 24, 2004, the last day of the Annual Meeting of ACP in New Orleans.



This is the very first time that a Governor has been elected from downstate and my hope is that I will be able to carry on the legacy of my predecessor, Dr. Virginia Collier. We congratulate Dr. Collier, who has recently been elected as a Regent.

## CHAPTER MEETING FEBRUARY 21, 2004

The meeting itself was a great success. Topics discussed were excellent and very informative. Unfortunately, the number of the participants had somewhat dropped as compared to the previous two years. I have no good explanation for this although I think that not many people from downstate attended this great meeting. My job as the new Governor will be to focus on efforts on how to get many more internists and subspecialists involved in our educational planning as well as encourage them to attend future meetings. In addition, I have the intention to meet with the senior medical residents from Christiana Care in the next couple of months to have their input to further our efforts and promote ACP-related matters.

My special thanks to **Brian Aboff, MD** and **Susan M. Keith, MD**, who as chair and vice chair of the planning committee spent a great deal of time to get the best speakers for this past Scientific Conference. I am glad that Dr. Keith remains actively involved as the new chair of the program committee and I am extremely pleased to announce that **Tabassum Salam, MD** will be our next vice chair of the program committee.

## ANNUAL SESSION APRIL 22-24, 2004, NEW ORLEANS

More than 250 sessions provided comprehensive coverage of internal medicine, the subspecialties and issues in practice management and health care policy.

As usual, the sessions were great and very instructive. I enjoyed seeing our colleagues from Delaware as well as other states and discussing the important ACP-related issues with the major players and contributors. Prior to the annual meeting, there were meetings of the Board of Governors and Board of Regents. Among the important issues discussed and decided on are the following:

**Steven Weinberger**, MD, FACP, a well-known pulmonologist from Boston, is now in charge of MKSAP (Medical Knowledge Self-Assessment Program). He garnered prestige as a principal author of Up to Date MKSAP 14 which is now under development and will most likely provide summary modules as preparation for the boards.

Dr. Weinberger raised several questions in his speech, and the important ones are:

1. What are the needs of the practicing physicians?
2. What are the external requirements which necessitate the practicing physicians to maintain certification?
3. How does the ACP convince more physicians, i.e., internists, as well as subspecialists, to accept these requirements?

**Sheldon Greenfield**, MD, FACP discussed performance measures and public health. He is the Director of Health Quality Research at the University of California, Irvine. Dr. Greenfield introduced the concept of Aggregate Score as a fair method of evaluating physicians. He gave examples of reaching a reasonable and acceptable level of hemoglobin A1C in diabetics as one way of evaluating the practicing physicians who are involved in the care of diabetic patients.

In this regard, the data presented by him was somewhat discouraging; i.e., there were two extremes: one group of physicians who did very well and brought hemoglobin A1C down to a very good range and one other group who did not perform well and their efforts failed to satisfactorily control hyperglycemia and as a result hemoglobin A1C remained significantly abnormal. I questioned him as to what measures can be taken to improve the quality. Unfortunately, neither he nor I have any immediate solution. We are all hoping that ACP will succeed in devising methods which will improve performance quality of practicing physicians.

As your Governor, I encourage every internist and subspecialist to attend our annual meeting, which is being held in two separate locations. I want to hear from you, address your needs and try to assist practicing physicians to improve the quality of care and performance.

Dr. Greenfield's work with the insurer and other stakeholders is a work in progress that we will be seeing and hearing more of in the future.

**Dennis O'Leary**, MD, MACP spoke on tort reform and patient safety. He is President and CEO of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organization. He states that 4-1/2 years after report from the Institute of Medicine we seem to lack the collective that will bring us to the tipping point. He urged alignment of incentives for patient safety. He gave examples of drugs and devices which are brought to the market on a regular basis. He mentioned that with the introduction of new technologies and new drugs, there are inherent new safety concerns which need to be addressed. He went on to say that constantly expanding the improvement in medicine undermines our efforts to standardize care. This is all happening in the face of a tort crisis.

He also stated that no hard evidence exists that the tort system has improved the medical system. The specialist and subspecialist exodus from care is dramatic. He mentioned that because of this, an extra one billion dollars per year is being spent on health care.

The current tort system hinders the sentinel event reporting because of the risk of discovery. Information from the Institute of Medicine indicates that less than 1% of these events are reported to the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organization. Dr. O’Leary thought that everyone is to be blamed. He said, “Leaders of healthcare, physicians, nurses, and administrators have no training in system analysis.” He also stated, “Medicare pays the same amount of money for our service whether the care is good or bad.” He gave the following points as possible solutions to the problem:

- The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organization is to facilitate communications among health care teams.
- To take a leading role in educating and training of the staff of the different organizations directly or indirectly involved in patient care, the educational system needs to build systems thinking, team work, and human factor training into its curriculum.
- Patient safety legislation is desperately needed to protect the reporting of adverse events on a national level.
- Tort reform is a separate need but necessary to patient safety.

Among the other topics discussed at the ACP annual meeting were revitalization and political action committees (PACs). Regarding revitalization, the leadership of the College held a Summit last November. Three major topics were identified:

- To increase practice efficiency and to decrease practice hassles.
- To improve payment for services rendered by physicians.
- To endorse the value of internal medicine using stakeholder groups and training for the new world.

A great deal of credit goes to the members of the Summit by acknowledging that internal medicine training is out of phase with the clinical realities of the day-to-day practice. The College pledges to work with the other organizations to rectify the situation.

Finally, the PAC for ACP is being set up and should be operational within one year. This is extremely important in view of the fact that it allows ACP more leverage in its lobbying efforts.

**2005 DELAWARE CHAPTER  
SCIENTIFIC MEETING**

This meeting will be held on **Saturday, February 26, 2005.**  
Stay tuned and save this date.

## LEADERSHIP DAY 2004

The ACP held its Annual Leadership Days on May 18-19, 2004 in Washington, DC. **Debbie Zarek, Dave Donahue, John DeCarli, Jose Pando** and **Mansour Saberi** attended the meeting. We met with a representative of Representative Castle, Senator Biden, as well as Senator Carper. The major issues discussed were the Medicare fee schedule, access to health care for the uninsured, and malpractice reform.



From Left to Right: **Dr. Mansour Saberi**  
**Dr. John DeCarli** Senator **Tom Carper**  
**Dr. Debbie Zarek** **Dr. Dave Donahue**

Because it is an election year, no significant legislation is expected to pass. However, there continues to be much interest in these issues, and we are working to build long-term relationships with congressional representatives and staff. To this end I need the support of our members and would like to call on everyone to become a Key Contact member. We must work very hard and become 100% united in our efforts to pass the appropriate legislation in our state.

We need to approach our local representatives and corral their votes in order to reform the existing malpractice laws. I plead with all of you to call your representatives or send an e-mail to them. Remember, Congress will not take any action on this matter this year because of the election; only our state legislators can help us.

We thank Senator Carper, who personally talked with us about the above issues and agreed to have his picture taken with us.

## SUPPORTING YOUR CHAPTER THROUGH CHAPTER DUES

Chapter dues are the backbone of local activities and vital to the success of our chapter. While we are provided some financial support from the national office, the chapter dues collected provide the majority of financial support for local activities. Educational meetings, mentoring programs for medical students, local Associates' research competitions, advocacy with state legislators, and participation by chapter leaders in Leadership Day on Capitol Hill are just some of the activities supported by your chapter dues. Many of these activities are orchestrated by unpaid volunteer leaders in our chapter. However, the increase in activities at the local level has created the need for additional staff support to help manage the day to day operation of the chapter. Your chapter dues help support the cost of local staff and provide funding for new and existing chapter initiatives. When you receive your dues notice, please remember to include the chapter dues in your payment. You will be contributing to the success of many grass roots activities happening right here at home.

### WE NEED YOUR E-MAIL TO RECEIVE VITAL CHAPTER UPDATES.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

Please fax this sheet to **Mansour Saberi, MD, FACP** at 302-645-1173.

## **LOWER DELAWARE SYMPOSIUM**

**September 11, 2004**

The 6th Annual Lower Delaware Symposium will be held on Saturday, September 11, 2004 at the Atlantic Sands Hotel and Convention Center in Rehoboth Beach. The program will bring nationally well-known speakers from all over the U.S. to talk on topics of general interest to internists and subspecialists. For further information, please contact Bandu Palekar, MD, FACP at 302-645-1805.

Please register as early as possible. We need to know how many people are planning to come to the meeting. There is also a dinner session Saturday night.

### **SATURDAY, September 11, 2004**

- 7:30 a.m.      **Registration and Breakfast**
- 8:00            **Opening Remarks and Welcome**  
Mansour Saberi, MD, FACP  
Governor, ACP Delaware Chapter
- 8:05            **Update in Allergy**  
Larry C. Borish, MD, FACP
- 9:00            **Recognizing Non-Alzheimer's Form of Dementia**  
Murray Grossman, MD
- 10:00          *BREAK*
- 10:30          **New Thoughts on the Diagnosis and Management of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)**  
Lucinda A. Harris, MD, FACP
- 11:30          *Lunch*
- 12:30 p.m.    **Update in Infectious Diseases**  
John G. Bartlett, MD, MACP
- 1:30            **Idiopathic Deep Vein Thrombosis/Pulmonary Embolus (DVT/PE):  
What the Data Tells Us about Duration of Anticoagulation**  
Walter K. Kraft, MD
- 2:30            **Closing Remarks**  
Mansour Saberi, MD, FACP

### **Evening Program**

- 6:00            **Reception**
- 7:00            **Erectile Dysfunction: Diagnosis and Treatment**  
Arthur L. Burnett, MD

### **INTERNAL MEDICINE MENTORING**

As in the previous year, we will have several medical students to work at Nanticoke, Kent, and Beebe Hospitals. Dr. Palekar has agreed to be the organizer, and many thanks to him for agreeing to act as Chairman of the Scientific Program Downstate Meeting as well.